

Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions  
for Migratory Bird Harvest Surveys - Parts Collection Survey

The following information is provided as part of a request for renewal of OMB's approval for information collections under OMB control number 1018-0015. This information collection approval request combines three surveys (the Waterfowl Hunter Survey, the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey, and the Parts Collection Survey) and their associated forms because the surveys are interrelated and/or dependent upon each other. This request includes a separate supporting statement for each of those three surveys, accompanied by a single set of attachments that includes a table summarizing the burden for all forms associated with control number 1018-0015. This supporting statement addresses the Parts Collection Survey.

A. Justification

1. Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-711) (Attachment 1) the Secretary of Interior has responsibility for setting appropriate regulations for the hunting of migratory birds, with due regard for maintaining such populations at healthy levels. The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a-742j) (Attachment 2) more specifically authorizes collection of such information as is necessary to determine appropriate hunting regulations. Information required for effectively governing harvests of migratory birds includes not only knowledge of the harvest's magnitude but also information of the species, age, and sex composition within that harvest, including the geographic and chronologic distribution of these components as they relate to various hunting regulations. The Parts Collection Survey provides the necessary species, age, and sex information as well as geographic and temporal distribution information.

2. This information collection is used by both Federal and State authorities to monitor the effects of various hunting regulations on the harvest of individual migratory bird species. The information has been particularly useful in evaluating the effects of changes in daily bag limits, hunting season length, and hunting season dates on harvest. Information obtained also gives the Service a great deal of insight into the status of the many species involved. If this information were not collected, the Service's ability to promulgate regulations allowing controlled hunting of migratory birds would be greatly weakened. The information is also used by private conservation and hunting organizations that are concerned with the welfare of our migratory bird resource.

The Parts Collection Survey estimates the species, sex, and age composition of the harvest, and the geographic and temporal distribution of the harvest. Randomly selected successful hunters who responded to the Waterfowl Hunter Survey or the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey the previous year are asked to complete and return a postcard (form 3-165A, Attachment 12, or form 3-165C, Attachment 13) if they are willing to participate in the Parts Collection Survey. Respondents are provided postage-paid envelopes before the hunting season and asked to send in a wing or the tail feathers from each duck, goose, or coot (form 3-165, Attachment 14) they harvest, or a wing from each woodcock, band-tailed pigeon, snipe, rail, or gallinule (form 3-165B, Attachment 15) they harvest. The wings and tail feathers are used to identify

the species, age, and sex of the harvested sample. Respondents are also asked to report on the envelope the date and location (state and county) of harvest for each bird. Results of this survey are combined with harvest estimates from the Waterfowl Hunter Survey and the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey to provide species-specific national harvest estimates. The combined results of these surveys enable the Service to evaluate the effects of season length, season dates, and bag limits on the harvest of each species, and thus help determine appropriate hunting regulations.

3. The envelopes for the migratory bird wings and tail feathers are quite large and would not print out on a standard computer, thus we do not anticipate putting those envelopes on line.

4. Many State wildlife agencies conduct surveys to collect some information on migratory bird harvest within their State, but that information does not include reliable species-specific estimates, nor does it include age and sex composition data that can only be collected by examining harvested birds or their wings.

5. This information collection involves only individual migratory bird hunters.

6. If this information was not collected, the Service's ability to promulgate regulations allowing controlled hunting of migratory game birds would be greatly weakened. The health and well being of migratory bird populations demand that harvests be commensurate with population size. If these surveys were not conducted, the lack of accurate assessment of migratory bird harvests would logically dictate restrictive hunting regulations, with a loss in hunting recreation due to only vague knowledge of the effects of hunting on migratory game bird populations and fear of possible overharvest.

If the surveys were conducted less frequently than yearly intervals, it would be impossible to adequately monitor the status of migratory birds which can change substantially between years as a result of droughts, floods, freezes, or other conditions. Estimates are required for annually promulgating hunting regulations.

7. There are no special circumstances that require information to be collected in this manner.

8. Solicitation of comments on this information collection was published on April 12, 2001, in the Federal Register, Vol. 66, No. 71, pages 18973-18974 (Attachment 16). No comments were received in response to this notice.

Meetings and workshops are held several times annually between Service and State personnel responsible for management of migratory birds, at which time problems and needs related to harvest surveys are discussed and acted upon. The Service has representatives to each of the four flyways (groups of States) to coordinate migratory bird management with State biologists. The representatives are:

Atlantic Flyway:	Jerome R. Serie	301/497-5851
Mississippi Flyway:	Kenneth E. Gamble	573/876-1915
Central Flyway:	David E. Sharp	303/275-2385
Pacific Flyway:	Robert E. Trost	503/231-6162

Immediately prior to the annual setting of migratory bird hunting regulations, public hearings are held at which individuals may comment on the regulations-setting procedures, including the conduct of harvest surveys. The Service has provided information to the public at the Outdoor Writers Association of America and Association for Conservation Information Meetings. Voluntary written comments and suggestions received from survey participants are noted and considered.

9. No payments or gifts are provided to respondents.

10. Each hunter contacted receives an assurance that the survey is conducted in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974. Hunters are not asked to write their names on the questionnaires, and are assured that their names or identifications will not be associated with their questionnaires.

11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Approximately 6,000 hunters will respond to the postcard request to provide waterfowl parts (form 3-165A, Attachment 12). Response frequency is once annually, and it will require about 30 seconds to complete the form (50 total burden hours). About 8,400 respondents provide waterfowl parts in form 3-165 (Attachment 14). Response frequency for form 3-165 varies from once to up to 200 times annually dependent on the amount and success of hunting by individuals, averaging about 13 times per individual. The estimated time required to complete form 3-165 is 5 minutes, and about 109,000 completed forms are received annually (9,100 total burden hours). About 2,000 hunters will respond to the postcard request to provide wings from woodcock, snipe, rails, gallinules, and band-tailed pigeons (form 3-165C, Attachment 13). Response frequency is once annually, and it will require about 30 seconds to complete the form (17 total burden hours). About 3,000 respondents will provide wings using form 3-165B (Attachment 15), averaging 1.5 responses per individual annually. The estimated time to complete form 3-165B is 5 minutes (375 total burden hours). Thus, the total annual burden estimate for the Parts Collection Survey is 9,542 hours. Assuming an hourly cost of \$7.26, this will convert to \$69,274.92 total annual cost. See Attachment 17 for a table showing the burden calculations for all forms included in this approval request.

13. There is no non-hour cost burden to respondents.

14. The annual cost of these surveys to the Federal government is estimated as \$257,800. This estimate was derived from records of actual expenditures incurred in conducting these surveys in past years.

15. There are currently 131,992 burden hours in the OMB inventory for Migratory Bird Harvest Surveys (OMB No. 1018-0015). The increase of 6,925 hours is associated with another survey included in this approval request, not the Parts Collection Survey (see Attachment 17 and the Supporting Statement for the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey).

16. Plans are to continue the Parts Collection Survey on an ongoing annual basis.

#### Schedule for the Parts Collection Survey

June	Postcards soliciting participation in the survey are mailed to the Service in Laurel, Maryland, where respondents names and addresses are compiled in a database.
Jul-Aug	Employees prepare the parts envelopes for mailing.
Aug-Oct	Because they must be in the possession of survey participants at the start of the hunting season, parts envelopes are sent to participants about 2 weeks before the hunting season begins in each State. Hunting seasons open as early as September 1 in many States, and as late as early November.
Sep-Mar	Hunters mail parts to collection points in each Flyway throughout the hunting season, which continues to mid-March in some States.
Jan-Feb	Federal and State biologists assemble at each collection point to identify the species, age, and sex of each part. Late arriving parts are sent to Laurel in early April and identified there.
Feb-June	Data slips are shipped to Laurel, where the data are compiled in a database and analyzed in combination with information derived from the Waterfowl Hunter Survey and the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey.
July	The reports must be prepared and distributed by late July, in time for the public hearing on hunting regulations for migratory game birds.

17. Approval to not display the OMB approval expiration date is not requested.

18. There are no exceptions to the certification statement contained in Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I for the information being collected.

## B. Collection of information employing statistical methods

1. About 92,200 duck wings and 16,200 goose tails are collected and examined by biologists out of a universe of 15,770,000 ducks and 3,057,000 geese harvested. These parts are obtained from about 9,000 successful waterfowl hunters who return form 3-165 out of a universe of 1,135,000 successful waterfowl hunters. State figures are given in Table 7. The sample of hunters who are sent form 3-165B consists of about 6,400 successful hunters from a sample of about 293,200 active woodcock, snipe, rail, gallinule, and band-tailed pigeon hunters. About 11,100 wings are collected and examined out of a universe of 1,344,400 birds harvested.
2. Samples of successful hunters from the previous year's Waterfowl Hunter Survey and Migratory Bird Hunter Survey are asked to complete and return a postcard (forms 3-165A and C), volunteering to contribute wings and tails during the following hunting season. The samples are randomly selected in proportion to the estimated harvest in each State. Those that volunteer are sent a cover letter with instructions and a supply of pre-addressed, postage-paid return envelopes (forms 3-165 and 3-165B) for mailing in the wings and tails. Inner envelopes to protect other mail from stains and seepage are enclosed with the instructions and return envelopes. These packages are sent to survey volunteers before the hunting season opens in their state. Throughout the hunting season, survey participants mail in parts to four collection points (one in each flyway), where they are stored until they are examined. At the end of the hunting season, biologists examine each part to determine species, age, and sex composition of the sample; hunters can not reliably determine this information. After those data have been compiled, respondents are sent a personalized thank you letter detailing the species, age, and sex of each bird from which they contributed a wing or a tail.

State-specific harvest estimates obtained from the Waterfowl Hunter Survey and the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey are combined with ratios estimated from the Parts Collection Survey to estimate species-, age-, and sex-specific harvests. Variances are not annually estimated because correlations among years and between the two surveys preclude the use of the usual variance estimators. However, 95% confidence limits derived from jackknife variance estimates have been about  $\pm 8\%$  for mallard harvest estimates and  $\pm 11\%$  for Canada goose harvest estimates at the flyway level.

The survey must be conducted annually because migratory bird harvests can change substantially between years depending on the size of the fall flight and hunting pressure. Estimates are required for annually promulgating hunting regulations.

3. The forms have been designed to be as attractive and as easy to use as possible, and the cover letters attempt to motivate the respondent and stress the importance of participation. The Parts Collection Survey maximizes response rates by using forms 3-165A and 3-165C to solicit volunteer participants from a randomly selected sample of successful hunters.

4. No tests are planned for the Parts Collection Survey, but we will use the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program to increase the sample size for the Parts Collection Survey to obtain larger samples of woodcock, band-tailed pigeon, snipe, rail, and gallinule wings.
5. The individual directly responsible for information collection and analysis is: Dr. Paul I. Padding, Chief, Section of Harvest Surveys, Division of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, MD 20708-4028 (301/497-5980).

The following statisticians have reviewed the statistical design and analysis of these surveys:

Ms. Christine M. Bunck, Program Coordinator, Biomonitoring Environmental Status and Trends, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240 (202/482-3972)

Mr. Grey W. Pendleton, Statistician (Biology), Biometrical Group, Patuxent Environmental Science Center, Laurel, MD (301/497-5632)

Dr. Robert E. Trost, Migratory Bird Management Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 911 N.E. 11th Avenue, Portland, OR 97232-4181 (503/231-6162)

Dr. Paul H. Geissler, Biologist, National Ecological Surveys Team, Patuxent Environmental Science Center, Laurel, MD 20708 (301/497-5780)

Table 7. Potential sample universe and sample for Parts Collection Survey - waterfowl.

State	Ducks Harvested	Duck Wings Collected	Geese Harvested	Goose Tails Collected
CT	22,280	383	15,190	394
DE	74,360	584	13,990	96
DC	0	0	0	0
FL	267,700	2,258	630	5
A T L A N T I C	GA	132,090	658	58
	ME	73,470	858	129
	MD	276,550	1,664	265
	MA	36,180	794	358
	NH	21,650	365	112
	NJ	76,800	1,366	616
	NY	179,240	3,272	1,141
F L Y W A Y	NC	264,820	2,358	258
	PA	143,050	1,262	1,135
	RI	7,380	196	125
	SC	218,450	989	15
	VT	40,190	499	57
	VA	183,410	1,108	516
	WV	3,700	219	121
AL	191,220	552	7,000	3
M I S S I S I P P I	AR	1,805,340	5,496	177
	IL	419,220	1,631	330
	IN	121,670	400	219
	IA	160,850	825	195
	KY	180,690	399	64
	LA	2,843,080	6,568	136
	MI	337,790	1,727	436
F L Y W A Y	MN	657,680	2,413	725
	MS	330,500	1,251	27
	MO	322,337	1,136	194
	OH	157,740	837	306
	TN	349,740	975	119
	WI	368,200	1,881	507

Table 7. Continued.

State		Ducks Harvested	Duck Wings Collected	Geese Harvested	Goose Tails Collected
CENTRAL FLYWAY	CO	155,800	1,118	97,340	527
	KS	164,010	1,689	34,510	310
	MT	146,880	1,482	44,970	541
	NE	130,830	1,227	81,480	407
	NM	61,560	747	12,370	72
	ND	424,590	2,963	133,920	968
	OK	256,200	2,429	25,730	118
FLYWAY	SD	254,670	1,913	139,280	800
	TX	1,249,770	7,020	500,210	799
	WY	42,150	549	23,430	205
PACIFIC FLYWAY	AZ	49,780	472	2,690	23
	CA	1,212,050	11,358	98,870	574
	ID	228,320	1,665	28,490	277
	NV	84,640	1,521	6,130	222
	OR	283,040	3,504	66,280	602
	UT	237,680	2,311	27,150	124
	WA	448,410	4,363	66,120	730
	AK	72,640	960	6,260	56
U.S. Total		15,770,360	92,215	3,057,400	16,194